

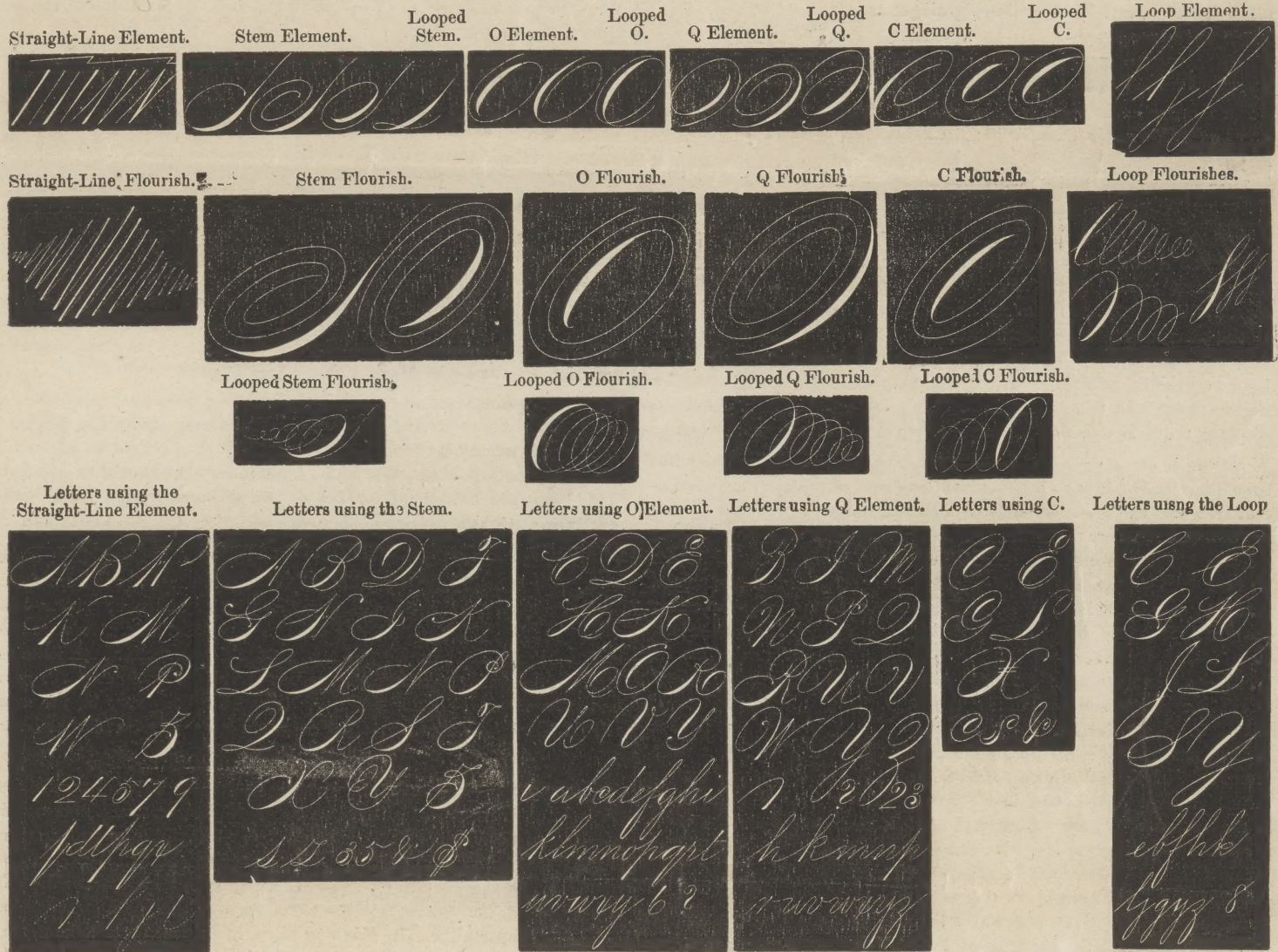
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# Chart of Babbittonian Penmanship.

By E. D. BABBITT,

Principal of Miami Commercial College, Dayton, O., and formerly Teacher of Penmanship in the State Normal School of Connecticut.

## THE SCIENCE OF PENMANSHIP.



## Penmanship

Consists of Three Departments,  
viz.:

Legibility, . . .

which  
requires

Bold rather than light strokes.  
Letters large rather than small.  
Letters well separated, and the  
Round rather than the angular hand.

Rapidity, . . .

which  
requires

Light rather than bold strokes.  
Letters small rather than large.  
Semi-angular hand.  
A compact rather than a sprawling hand.

Beauty, . . .

which  
requires

Regular Curvature, especially of the oval form.  
Parallelism.  
Contrast of Form and Shading.  
Smoothness of stroke.  
Neatness.



Legibility, or the quality in writing which makes it *easily read*, is of the greatest importance in *all* Penmanship, but more especially in writing Captions, Ledger Headings, Records, Names and Addresses of persons, Matter intended for publication, etc. Bold strokes and large letters are more easily seen than very small letters, with light strokes, though Beauty and Rapidity require that, in all ordinary writing, the majority of the strokes should not be heavy or very large, as they have a blotty and clumsy look. A Round Hand is more legible than an Angular Hand, but the old Round Hand is too laborious for ordinary use. Letters should be well separated, but if widely separated, Rapidity of execution will be interfered with. The foregoing principles of Legibility are illustrated by the following diagrams:



No. 1 being in the angular hand, and the letters not being separated, may be read *in, ni, iu, ui, m, or iii*; No. 2, being separated, becomes more legible, and must be either *iu* or *in*; No. 3 is still better, the letters being both separated and rounded, so that it may be read immediately as *in*.

Rapidity of execution is almost an indispensable requisite for a business man. The muscles of the fingers move more easily and rapidly in light than in heavy strokes, and the hand is less apt to cramp and get wearied from long writing. To write rapidly, the *elongated hand* must not be adopted on the one extreme, nor a running or sprawled hand on the other, as the pen in both cases has to move over too much space to make each letter. The semi-angular hand is more rapidly made than an entirely angular hand, as the pen glides more easily around a slight curve than it does around a sharp, abrupt turn. To sum up, Rapidity requires a *small, light, closely-written and semi-angular hand*.

Beauty is of very great importance in Penmanship. The Deity has shown his love of Beauty by the countless forms of grace which He has scattered over the Universe, and man should imitate his Maker by loving this same Beauty. **Curvature** is seen in the form of the rainbow, the sky, and the world, as well as of every leaf, and plant and flower. In Penmanship, especially in the capitals, the curves should be free and full, not cramped or broken. The Ellipsis, or what is nearly the same, the *Oval*, is more beautiful than the Circle, which is a stiffer and more formal curve. According to the Greeks, the best proportion for the Ellipsis is a length about half as great again as its breadth, and this is the best model for making the *Stem*, the *O*, the *Q*, and the *C* Elements. **Parallelism** is carried out by having all the down strokes in the same direction, all the up strokes in the same direction, a little more slanted than the down strokes, and all the continuous curves thrown around equi-distant in all parts. This gives a fine harmony in the strokes of a page. **Contrast** of light and shaded strokes gives a spirited effect to writing, like Emphasis in Oratory, or rhythm in Music or Poetry. One shaded stroke will offset several light strokes, and two or three shaded strokes will give a pleasing effect to even a long word. Capitals contrast pleasantly in size with the small letters of the same word, and the boldness of Text hands form a pretty contrast with the common round or semi-angular hand. *Smoothness* comes from striking both prongs of the pen alike on the paper. *Neatness* is best promoted by the use of a fine pen, by care in keeping small loops, as in small letter *e*, from running into a blot, and avoiding the crossing of shaded strokes.

## The Art of Penmanship.

THE Science of Penmanship explains what constitutes the *Principles* of correct writing, while the Art explains how to execute the writing itself.

**Movements.**—These consist of the **Finger Movement**, the **Muscular Movement**, the **Arm Movement**, and the **Combination Movement**.

The **Finger** movement is made with the fingers merely, the hand resting only on the two smaller fingers, and the arm resting on the table not over half way to the elbow. By experimenting, the pupil will see that the fingers are clogged in their motions, by resting the arm on the table as far up as the elbow, as some penmen direct. The *finger* movement is more *exact* and rapid for the small alphabet than any other, but is nervous and cramped in making the larger curved movements of the capitals.

The **Muscular** movement is made by rolling the arm back and forth on the muscles without moving the fingers or raising the arm from the table. It has more freedom than the finger movement, but less than the arm movement. To perform this best, the arm should rest on the table near the elbow.

The **Arm** movement is made by swinging the whole arm entirely raised from the table, excepting the small finger, which glides along on the paper and gives greater exactness to the motion. This is the most free and beautiful of all the movements, and should be used in all large movements and Capitals, with the exception, perhaps, of the straight-line element, which needs a little greater exactness. In curvature and shading, it is so much more perfect than the finger movement, as to be distinguished from it without the least difficulty. The horizontal straight-line element, together with the curved elements and their flourishes, should be practiced most thoroughly in this arm movement. The oval elements and their flourishes should be made large at first, extending over about three of the spaces inclosed by the blue lines, but should be diminished in proportion as the learner gets control of his arm, until the elements can easily be made within a single space.

The **Combination** movement is the coupling of two movements at a time. The *Muscular* and *Finger* movements may frequently be combined with advantage in small capitals and in a coarse small hand. The combination of the Arm and Finger movement should be avoided. The *Compound* movement consists of two or more strokes made without lifting the pen.

**Position.**—While adopting the arm or finger movement, sit with the left side to the desk. By resting the left arm, the body is kept from swinging about, while the right arm is left free and unincumbered in its movements by the friction of the desk. For the muscular movement, face the desk, or, if you choose, sit with the right side a little to the desk, as the muscular action is best developed by resting the arm near the elbow. Whatever the position of the body may be, the arm should have about the same direction as the paper itself, while the body and head should be as erect as possible.

**Holding the Pen.**—Hold the pen with a light pressure between the thumb and the first and second fingers, placing the second finger under the pen as far as the middle or top of the nail, while the two smaller fingers are turned partly under the hand, so as to be out of the way of the larger ones. Point the pen in the direction in which you make the shaded mark, and let it face the same way, so that both prongs can strike the paper alike. In this way alone can smooth marks be made. With the ordinary slant this will make it point over the right shoulder; with the upright hand it should point further to the right; with the back hand, still further to the right, while with the Italian hand it should point directly away from the shoulder. To make the pen move easily on the paper and wear a long time, place a soft, smooth newspaper under the single leaf on which you write; also let the pen lie down as much as possible, so that it will not catch and splatter in the up strokes.

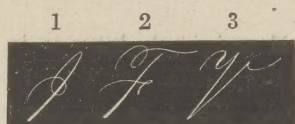
**Slant.**—By the principle just explained, it will be seen that the more the writing slants, the more difficult it is to get the pen to point in far enough to make a smooth mark. All penmen now admit that the old writers slanted too much, placing the standard generally at 45 degrees. Nature has established no absolute law on this subject, and it is sufficiently definite to state that a slant somewhere between 50 and 60 degrees is probably best for common use. The greater the slant, other things being equal, the more sprawling and rough will the letters be.



# The Demands of a True System of Penmanship.

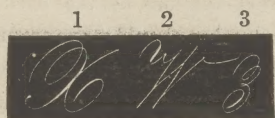
**1. It should be comprehensive, and yet simple.**—One modern author of Penmanship remarks, that there are forty-four elementary marks in his system, while another has groups of letters so numerous, and extending over half a printed volume, that it would require a longer time to learn the theory alone, by such a plan, than to learn the theory and practice both by a simplified system. More than that, these systems have omitted some most important movements, and can not, therefore, be considered truly comprehensive. The Babbittonian system aims to remedy this defect, by laying down six elements as the direct foundation of all the capitals, small alphabet, figures, punctuation, flourishing and drawing that the human hand is capable of.

**2. Those styles of letters are best, other things being equal, which have the fewest strokes, without destroying beauty of form.**—In violation of this rule, we quote the following forms of letters, which have destroyed the beauty of curvature for the sake of brevity, and have failed at last:



No. 1 has four strokes, but could be made in a handsomer style with three. No. 2 is equivalent to eight strokes, as it has six strokes, and requires the pen to be lifted twice, which is equal to at least two more. It could be made far more gracefully with five strokes. No. 3 requires six strokes, but could be made much more elegantly with four.

**3. Beautiful letters do not necessarily require a superabundance of strokes.**—Take the following, selected from among many similar ones:



No. 1, which is perhaps the most common copy-book form of X, has eight strokes, but could be made more gracefully with four. No. 2 has ten strokes, but by no means equals in beauty what might be done with five strokes, and No. 3 has, at least, twice as many strokes as are necessary for the prettiest effect. Such forms, as well as many others which might be presented, cause a great waste of time and labor, without having the element of beauty to atone for this waste. This is an age of steam and lightning, and demands rapidity in every thing. It is also an age of taste, and hence this rapidity must be combined with beauty.

**4. Other things being equal, that system of Penmanship is best which gives the most complete discipline of the Fingers, Muscles, and Arms.**—In this respect we do not suppose that any one will pretend that the existing systems of the day present so great a variety of discipline as the Babbittonian. Thus in the Straight Line element we have the shaded line, the hair line, the increasing shade, the decreasing shade, the upright stroke, the horizontal stroke, and the compound strokes as developed into a flourish, including both large and small movements. In the four Oval elements, we have the movement from outside, inward, in both directions, from inside, outward, in both directions, with their looped variations. Then we have the same elements carried out into flourishes, so as to render the hand skillful in both small and large movements. In the Loop element we have a style of curve distinct and by itself, although in Penmanship it generally runs into, or out of a straight line. The peculiar advantage of

this system is, that it gives a splendid control of the hand in the very forms used in all writing, quite unlike those systems which train the hand to move round and round in the same line, or to form lines from right to left across the page, both of which are totally unlike any movements which are used in real writing.

**5. Penmanship should be treated as a Science, as well as an Art, and not as a matter of mere mechanical imitation.**—The Laws of Legibility, of Rapidity, and of Beauty should be distinctly stated, so that the student may have some definite ideal to aim at, and not be left to work in the dark. This system, as will be seen, has given this department special attention.

**6. The forms of letters should by no means always be made after one unchanging model.**—The leaves and flowers, and other beautiful objects of nature, are infinitely varied, and the human mind revolts at perpetual sameness. But while this is true, a great law of unity runs through the whole, and links it in delightful harmony. So should it be in Penmanship, and whatever changes are made, the letters should always contain some leading element of Beauty, Legibility, and Rapidity. Thorough discipline in the elements and elementary flourishes will enable the student to make with ease a far greater variety of capitals than is exhibited in these copies; but, if he is naturally awkward and can not give his hand a proper elementary discipline, he would do better to confine himself to a single form of each letter.

**7. The advanced student should frequently be required to write without having a prepared copy before him.**—In this way he will learn to be self-dependent, and draw upon his own memory and skill, instead of being a mere copyist and imitator. This has for some years been a favorite idea of the author, and one system has already appeared in which this plan has been adopted. To carry out this advantage, sentences and quotations have been printed on the backs of some of the copy-slips of the Babbittonian system in the common Roman style.

**8. One of the most effective ways of inculcating Penmanship, or any other branch of study, is to exhibit that which is wrong, as well as that which is right.**—Most of the systems of Penmanship now most widely before the people are almost wholly deficient in this respect. To prove the great importance of this plan, let the following experiment be tried: Let a hundred pupils write after a copy which is entirely correct, for half an hour. Stop them a minute or two, and write out on the blackboard the incorrect forms of the same letters which they have been making. After this, let them write half an hour longer. An observing eye could now point out, probably, in every book, the very place at which the pupil stopped to notice the incorrect forms on the board, just from the superior style in which all the latter copies have been written. This experiment has been tried in very many cases by the author himself, and is no mere theory. For this reason the copy-slips of this system have the correct copies on one side, and the incorrect copies, with full explanations, on the other side.

The same elementary system as is here presented was published by the author in New York, in 1851, in a work called "*The Science and Art of Penmanship*," and after having taught it to thousands of pupils in Seminaries, Normal Schools, and in the Miami Commercial College, he is doubly convinced of the correctness of the system, and has never had occasion to change the great radical ideas on which it is based, in the slightest respect.

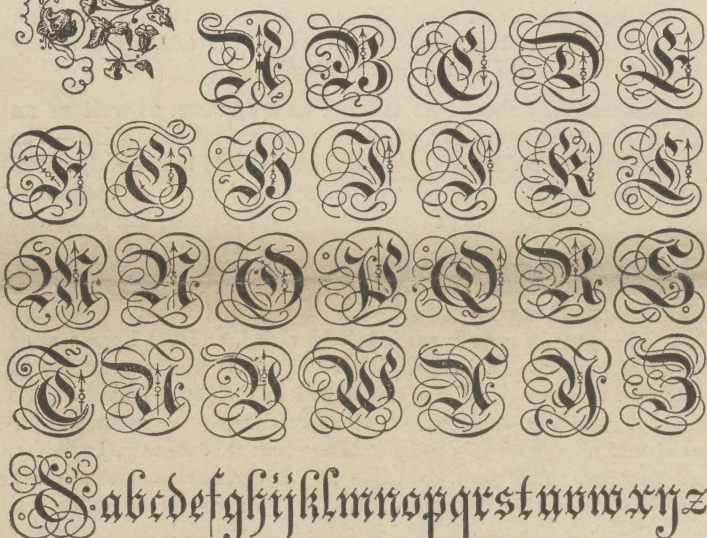
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**BABBITT & WILT,**  
Principals of Miami Commercial College,  
DAYTON, OHIO.



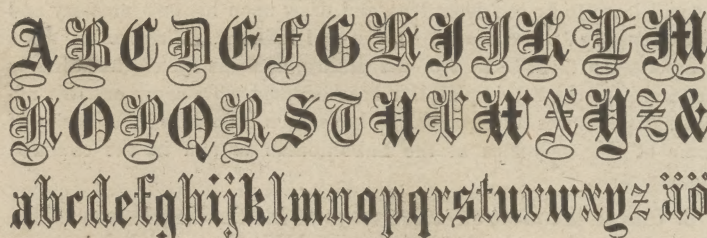


GERMAN TEXT.

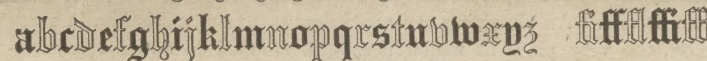
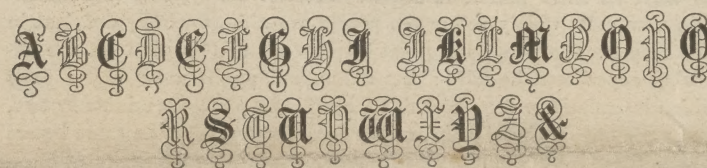


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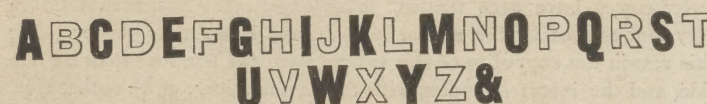
OLD ENGLISH.



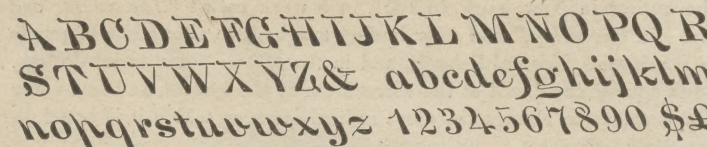
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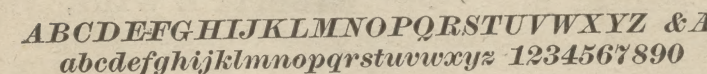
GOETHICS.



BULLETIN.



BOLD ITALIC.



## To Teachers and Learners.

As a first step, the names of the elements and the outlines of the science and art of Penmanship should be studied on the chart of Babbittonian Penmanship.

The copies should be taken in their regular order, from No. 1 onward, excepting Copy No. 39, (Spencerian capitals), in case it is thought best not to vary the previous styles. Gentlemen can, if they choose, skip the ladies' copies, but ladies may write all the copies with profit, as the business forms are highly important to them as well as to the other sex, and they need not write them quite as coarse as the copies themselves.

If the student desires to get a splendid control of the hand and arm, he must make up his mind to scribble up many sheets of paper in making the elementary flourishes, for which reason it would be better to use loose sheets of paper, at least in all the first copies. For very young beginners it would probably be better to let them practice on the small letters, etc., in copies No. 7, 8, 9, 10, 11, 12, 13, and 14, before making the elements. The copies are already highly simplified, but if there should prove a general desire on the part of teachers for a small series of still simpler primary copies, we shall endeavor to meet the public wants. Young beginners can get the forms of letters and control of the arms and fingers quite well by *slate* practice before using the pen.

Teachers can make the exercise interesting and useful by explaining on the black-board awkward forms of the letters, and by examining pupils in regard to the explanations on the back of the copy. It is quite important that the teacher should move around among the pupils, correcting their position and pointing out deficiencies in their writing, and giving encouragement where they do well. If the writing class is large, the copies could be distributed by a monitor for each row of desks. If the class numbers fifty, it would be quite convenient to have as many as sixty copies of the same number, for reasons which we can not explain here. For the success and convenience of the teacher, we would suggest the following routine, each step of which may be regulated by a stroke of the bell:

- No. 1. Monitors come forward and receive copies.
- No. 2. Monitors distribute copies.
- No. 3. Students study the copy for two or three minutes.
- No. 4. Give attention to questions and black-board explanations.
- No. 5. Open inkstands.
- No. 6. Take pens and paper.
- No. 7. Take position.
- No. 8. Write.

After a short time it will not be necessary to name each step, but calling the numbers or touching the bell will be sufficient. In this way, it is almost certain that the students will make great progress in a useful and beautiful art, and the teacher will get great credit for this progress, for, however much parents may fail to see the advancement of their children in other things, fine penmanship speaks for itself.